California GARDEN

MAY-JUNE
1971

50 cents

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to enjoy

Floral Association General Meetings on third Tuesdays.

May 18 (11 AM) Second Annual "SWAP POT". Bring your containers, plants, etc. and swap. Edibles available, too.
(1 PM) "Cool Arrangements for Summer" Mrs. Kirkpatrick.
June 15 (6:30) Annual Meeting. Pot luck dinner. For details see Newsletter.

to tour

For reservations and information call Floral Office (232-5762)

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to go

May 1 (8-4) "Iris Trek" Seven Gardens. Leave from Holiday Inn, Mission Valley. $6.00.
May 1-2 (Sat. 2-5, Sun. 10-4) "An Anniversary Bouquet" Poway Valley Garden Club's 10th annual standard flower show. 12320 Meadowbrook Lane (Auditorium), Poway. Open to the public. Free.
May 1-2 (Sat. 2-6, Sun. 10-4) "Down to Earth" Fallbrook Garden Club's 40th standard flower show. Open to the public. Free. 427 No. Hill St. (Masonic Hall), Fallbrook.
May 1-2 Open House. San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society. Floral Building, Balboa Park. Open to the public. Free.
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May 8-9 Geranium Show, Arboretum, Arcadia.
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May 22 San Diego Epiphyllum Show. Floral Building. Open to the public.
May 28-31 Santa Anita Bonsai Show. Arboretum, Arcadia.
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WHEN WE PLANNED THIS ISSUE EVERY PLANT WE TALKED ABOUT WAS PURPLE, SO WE DECIDED TO DO A PURPLE ISSUE. WE ARE FEATURING IRISES BECAUSE OF THE SPECIAL TREK IN SAN DIEGO THIS MAY . GUEST EDITORS BILL GUNTHER AND JIM LaMASTER ARE IRIS EXPERTS WHO HELPED WITH THE WHOLE MAGAZINE . BILL IS A RETIRED NAVY OFFICER WHO IS EDITOR OF THE SPURIA NEWSLETTER AND WHO WRITES FOR OTHER IRIS PUBLICATIONS . HE HAS THE LARGEST SPECIES IRIS COLLECTION IN THIS AREA , AND IN HIS SPARE TIME HE PLAYS CELLO IN FOUR MUSICAL ENSEMBLES. JIM LaMASTER ALSO IS AN IRIS GARDENER ; HE TOOK SWEEPSTAKES AWARDS AT THE LATEST ARIL IRIS SHOW IN LOS ANGELES , AND HE WILL BE SHOW CHAIRMAN OF THE SPURIA IRIS SHOW AT THE FORTHCOMING NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY IN WICHITA, KANSAS. WHEN NOT SHOWING IRISES HE SHOWS HIS COCKER SPANIELS.

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The San Diego Floral Association

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THE COVER

A sketch by Charles C. Clare of the New York Botanical Gardens featuring at the top right a Tall Bearded Iris with Japanese Irises below. At the left are two Aril blossoms.

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The most popular Iris ... an editorial

Bill Gunther

EVERY YEAR The American Iris Society publishes a "popularity poll" which lists various iris varieties, presumably in their order of popularity. But the American Iris Society's list is subject to question. It may be slanted because it includes tall bearded irises only; other types are excluded from consideration. It may not be valid because selection of winners is based on majority whim rather than reality.

The most logical measure of popularity of iris varieties might be to compare the total land space, or acreage, occupied by each variety. The variety occupying the most acreage might be considered the most popular. However, when we do that, we find that the variety occupying the most acreage doesn't appear on the current list of the American Iris Society's most popular irises.

Another possible measure of iris varieties would be to review statistics on the number of bulbs or rhizomes of each variety which are sold each year and conclude that the variety which is sold in greatest quantity is the most popular. When we do that, we again find that the variety which is sold in greatest quantity doesn't appear on the AIS list of most popular irises.

Somewhat desperately, we might try a third criterion. We might compare the total dollar value in sales of each variety and then conclude that the variety which brings in the greatest income to commercial iris growers is the most popular. Again, when we do that, we find that the leading variety doesn't appear on the AIS list of most popular irises.

The previous paragraphs are true, and if reading them shakes the confidence of anyone who is a member of the American Iris Society, so will the next paragraphs.

The iris which in 1970 occupied the greatest total acreage in the U.S.A., and which also accounted for the largest sales, both numerically and monetarily, is the variety BLUE RIBBON. It is not a tall bearded iris; it is a Dutch iris. In second place was another Dutch iris, HILDEGARDE. In third place was another Dutch iris, IMPERATOR. The Dutch iris WEDGEWOOD, which in previous years was among the leaders, now is significant only at the beginning of the season, when it is easiest to force into early bloom.

Don Hibbs, of Vista, California, is one of the nation's largest commercial iris growers. This year he grew about 5,000,000 iris plants from bulbs; during the period from Christmas to early May he ships about 12,000 stalks of cut irises daily to wholesale florist markets across the nation. The stalks are harvested when the color shows, but before the blossoms open. After the bloom-stalks are harvested, the bulbs are deliberately destroyed by disking.

Before new bulbs are planted, the fields are covered with acres of plastic sheeting, and the soil then is sterilized by gas injection. Partly because of weather requirements and partly because of vulnerability to viral and fungicidal diseases, it is economically more efficient for cut-flower growers in California and Florida to purchase all their bulbs from specialty bulb-growers rather than reusing old bulbs or to propagate their own new bulbs. The specialty bulb-growers are located in Holland and in our own states of Oregon and Washington.

Earle Darst, of Mount Vernon, Washington, is another of the nation's largest commercial iris growers. He propagates iris bulbs; then he sells the bulbs to growers who use the bulbs to grow stalks of Dutch irises for the cut flower market. He had 65 acres planted in irises last year, and at peak season he had 84 employees. Mr. Darst has been hybridizing Dutch irises for many years. Six new Darst varieties were introduced by a Darst Bulb Farm catalogue which was issued last year; 40,000 copies of that catalogue were printed.

But, those 1970 introductions as of this date are not yet registered with the American Iris Society. That is because, as an official matter of policy, the AIS never has registered bulbous irises. Further, these new introductions cannot win the AIS Honorable Mention award this year, because the AIS required that an iris be "officially registered" as a prerequisite to that award. Further, these new irises cannot win the Award of Merit two years from now, because the Honorable Mention is a prerequisite to the Award of Merit.

So far as AIS awards are concerned, Dutch irises have been excommunicated from the genus *Iris*.

Perhaps that is why the largest commercial iris growers in America are not members of the American Iris Society. Understandably, they do not feel wanted. Understandably, too, the largest commercial iris growers in the nation think of the AIS as being mainly a group of dilettantes.

Their evaluation may be quite correct.

=()=()=

THE ONLY *wild iris* OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY.

Bill Gunther

The photo which accompanies this item was taken at Lake Cuyamaca last May. The blossoms and foliage are *Iris missouriensis*, the only wild iris indigenous to San Diego County.

Big clumps of this iris grow in the area about a half-mile south of the Cuyamaca dam along the road to Descanso. They are on the downhill (east) side of the road and so close to the road itself that they can be viewed from your car. They are in full bloom from late May through June and into July. Height of bloomstalks is about two feet.

Botanists describe the irises at Lake Cuyamaca as being a "relictual colony" because for many centuries they have been completely isolated from the main range of the species which is the Rocky Mountain area from Arizona to Canada. Because of this isolation, the Cuyamaca irises have developed slight differences from irises of the same species elsewhere; because of those differences they are known botanically as the "Cuyamaca strain" of the species.

It is illegal to dig up wild plants at the Cuyamaca location, but a few seeds may be collected anytime from late summer to the first snowfall. These seeds, if planted about a half-inch deep, will sprout the following spring. The small plants should be kept well watered until established in your garden; the first bloom will be a year or more after germination.

Like all irises, *Iris missouriensis* is a perennial. But unlike most native irises of the Pacific Coast, the foliage of *Iris missouriensis* goes completely dormant in the late fall, then springs up again from the rhizomatous root system in the spring. The stems of this iris are wonderfully stiff and erect; the blossoms are highly veined with a slate-blue color on a base of white. The bloomstalks make an attractive and unusual conversation item when used in table arrangements, and the plant serves the same function in the garden.

Try it in your own garden.

Bill Gunther, one of the Guest Editors of this issue, is Editor of the Spuria Newsletter and is a writer for other iris publications.

This is the shape of the blossom of the Dutch iris HILDEGARDE, one of the most popular irises in the world. The Dutch irises are extremely important to commercial florists - but, surprisingly, are generally ignored by iris hobbyists.

Don Hibbs walks though one of his multiacre iris fields near Vista, California. No blossoms are in sight - because all the stalks are harvested and shipped before the blossoms open.

Guests in the Garden

James LaMaster

AN IRIS TREK is something like a county fair, but with nothing but irises on display. The irises are exhibited in several private gardens. Many of the plants on exhibit are owned by and exhibited by the various hybridizers. Such plants are known as "guests" because they are visiting the garden; they are not owned by the owner of the garden; they are the property of the hybridizer.

Hybridizers send guest irises to trek gardens for two reasons: (1) to test the plant on growth and blooming qualities in a different environment, and (2) to obtain reactions from the human garden guests who will be evaluating during the trek. Every person on the trek has ballots; these votes determine which of the irises win the awards-something like the prizes at the county fair. The seedling irises which win the awards are those which the hybridizer then registers, names, and introduces as a new commercial variety.

Saturday, May 1, will be iris trek day in San Diego County. Chartered shuttle buses will be routed to seven iris gardens in the area. Gardens "on tour" were volunteered by their owners last season who have spent a large part of the intervening time in primping and preening their gardens, (and in making room for the guest plants). As hosts, they want May 1 to be a memorable, worthwhile, and beautiful event for the human guests, who will come from all parts of California, Arizona, etc. Partly by plan and partly by chance, each of the seven tour gardens has specialty features not duplicated in any of the other six gardens; a preview follows:

Perhaps the garden of Mr. & Mrs. Ted E. Hayden of Spring Valley has more of the most recent iris introductions than any other on this trek. Mrs. Hayden (Helen) is a specialist; she concentrates all her attention on tall bearded irises and thus has accumulated one of the very best collections of newer tall bearded varieties which can be seen in this area. She has prepared a special chart of her garden for the convenience of visitors who might desire to locate any particular variety.

The largest trek garden, both in size and in number of plants, is that of Mr. & Mrs. Sanford Roberts of El Cajon. Sanford Roberts is a hybridizer who is striving for a dark tall bearded iris that will have substance enough to resist the heat, draught, and wind of San Diego County's inland areas. Visitors to his garden will have opportunity to evaluate his work by comparing his hundreds of iris seedlings with new introductions from other hybridizers and areas.

Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Hiser of Spring Valley specialize in hard work. They maintain one large garden at their residence plus another on an otherwise-vacant lot located several blocks away. During this trek, visitors will see their lot garden, which contains numerous seedlings which Ray hybridized himself. The lot garden also has tall bearded, Louisiana, & spuria cultivars. This garden also has numerous seedlings of Mr. Lerton Hooker who recently retired and moved here from the Chicago area.

Mr. Walker Ferguson's garden in Escondido is well known to most old-timer irisarians. Fergy holds more Eric Nies Awards than any other person in the world. (The Eric Nies Award is the highest award for spuria irises. Need we state that his garden specializes in spurias ??) Mr. Ferguson also is the only person in this region who holds the coveted Hybridizers Medal which is awarded by the American Iris Society. The spuria FROST, in photo at left, is among Fergy's great introductions; very big, vigorous, shapely, & frosty white in color.

The garden of Mr. & Mrs. J. H. Chenoweth in Lemon Grove has as a specialty the newer Siberians, Louisianas, Pacific Coasts, and arilbreds - as well as seedlings of each of these series. Featured also are many of the newest tall bearded irises and seedlings of that series. This garden uniquely features a "memorial bed" of the latest irises of Tom Craig, one of the most famous hybridizers of bearded and spuria irises. Photo caught the Chenoweths busily at work coaxing an iris into bloom.

The garden of Mr. "Bill" Gunther in Del Mar features more iris species than can be seen in any other garden in San Diego County. In his collection can be found species of tall bearded, median, spuria, Pacific Coast, Japanese, Siberian, Louisiana, crested, and bulbous iris series. Many of his species are planted on a rustic backslope setting of rockwork and fish ponds. Others, in photo, are in a more formal front garden.

Mr. & Mrs. J. Otto Crocker's San Diego garden features a larger variety and diversity of plants, shrubs, and trees than any other trek garden. Loretta Crocker is active in many flower arranger's programs in southern California; she uses the various blossoms and plant materials from her garden in these programs. So far as we know, this garden produced this season's first spuria blossom in the northern hemisphere.

African Violets as a Hobby

Helen Van Zele

TIRED OF WOOD WORKING, knitting, bridge? Test your green thumb and raise African Violets. If air pollution grows any worse you might raise them for the oxygen they dispense! They know they must live up to their reputation as being "the world's favorite house plant". Unlike plants which have a definite blooming season, they bloom all year around.

When you purchase an African Violet, select a well-shaped plant with a single crown. A violet needs room for its leaves. If there are many crowns the leaves are bunched together and the crowns can't get proper light, air can't circulate through them, and the flower buds will have difficulty emerging. An African Violet should grow wheel shaped, one row of leaves growing symmetrically down over the next row with the flowers coming out in a wreath around the crown.

Light is very important. A violet will grow nice foliage but will not bloom unless it has proper light. Near a window is fine, but it must be protected from intense sunlight as too much light will yellow the leaves. It needs 12 to 14 hours of light, so when daylight is gone, a few more hours under a desk or floor lamp will be very advantageous. Violets like artificial light. In fact, some are grown very successfully under fluorescent tubes with never a ray of day-light all their lives. Violets tend to grow towards the light so the plant must be turned often in order to grow symmetrically.

Garden supply stores have sterilized potting soils labeled for African Violets. These packaged products will be of the light and porous consistency which violets prefer.

Always water with warm water, keeping the soil damp but not wet. Rain water is excellent, but avoid using chemically softened water. Feeding may be done at the same time, using either the liquid or granulated fertilizers which are available in garden supply stores. When feeding with every watering, use only one-fourth the amount stated in the directions.

As to warmth, violets enjoy the same temperature that you do, 70-75°; it could go lower at night but never lower than 60°. Daytime temperatures could be higher than 75°, though the plant must never be placed in direct heat as on a radiator. That would dry the foliage immediately. African Violets like proper circulation of air but abhor drafts.

Humidity is important; setting the pots on a tray of moistened pebbles will help. Fogging or misting plants will give better foliage and increase number and

Helen Van Zele has been growing African Violets for 10 years. She is President of the African Violet Society of America.

"Tommie Lou", a variegated, has been voted favorite for 3 years.

"Tiny Rose", a miniature in a 2 1/4 inch pot.

size of blossoms; however, plants must not be in direct sun or draft when they are misted. They even enjoy an occasional bath under the kitchen sink sprayer, but be sure the plant is dry before putting the plant back in the light. A good time to wash the plant is at night so the foliage will be dry by morning.

The size of the pot has a great deal to do with the condition of the plant. It is a mistaken idea that a violet should be in a large pot. Until it blooms, a violet should not be in a larger than two and one-fourth inch pot. When it blooms, it may be transferred to a four inch pot. If it is a fast growing variety, it can be put in a five to six inch pot, but never until the leaves are way over the sides. Violets like to have their roots crowded.

Perhaps all this seems quite complicated, but actually it isn't. You can do it easily, and a beautiful blooming plant will be your reward.

There is an infinite number of varieties of African violets. The flowers may be in all colors except yellow; they may be single, star shaped, double, semi-double, or crested. The same with the foliage. Leaves may be plain, ruffled, wavy, scalloped, heart-shaped, deeply notched, or variegated. Some are thin and delicate, while others are thick and hairy. The color of leaves runs the gamut from pale green to dark forest green, and some have bright red or dark maroon backs.

Plants are of various sizes: miniatures--six inches; semi-miniatures--eight inches; compacts or window-sill--12 inches; standard--from 14 to 20 inches; with some large plants ranging from 24 to 30 inches.

To know more about the care of African violets, send for the free culture leaflet available on request from the African Violet Society of America, Inc., P. O. Box 1326, Knoxville, Tennessee 37901.

Statice

Virginia M. Innis

"PURPLE" LOVERS grow statice in the warm areas of the Southwestern United States. There are 32 species of limonium several of which may be seen growing in the San Diego area. *Limonium perezi* is the great landscape and garden favorite which is seen most frequently.

Clusters of flowers up to three feet high and wide provide a profusion of color. The clusters are formations of many small flowers. The tiny flowers consist of two parts, an outer papery envelope which is the calyx and an inter part called the corolla. In *perezi* the calyx is not unlike Tyrinian purple and the corolla is white.

Arranging Qualities

Flower arrangers especially like *perezi*. The leaves are leathery when mature. Used in an arrangement, the leaves last for weeks and at times and under certain conditions aging leaves will get a purple-tinge. Eastern flower arrangers who migrate to the Southwest and find hosta difficult to grow substitute statice leaves. However, the leaves are never considered "as pretty" as hosta. Leaves grow up to 12 inches and are inclined toward a long quill like stem.

Fresh flowers are great for mass arrangements. The flowers dry and retain their color and are used as straw flowers. They will dry in an arrangement but most arrangers cut and hang clusters upside down to dry.

Seeding or Starting Statice

Statice is easy to start and grow. One way to start the plant is to shake dry-matured flowers over an area where you wish statice to grow. It is sold in packs at the nurseries or a more mature plant may be purchased in a gallon can. I have found that once the plant is established it doesn't take kindly to transplanting.

Statice is Hardy, disease free

The hardiness of the statice is evident in its wide use in roadside and beach landscaping. It will tolerate many soil conditions, extreme heat, strong sun, and some drought. Statice may be seen growing with native plants where other flowers could not survive. It is a wonderful disease free plant, but the snails like it. Snails will eat tender new mature growth, especially if you have many of the plants and lazy snails. The mature plant does make an excellent shady place where snails will converge.

If one has a passion for purple color, *Limonium perezi* is a "must" plant.

African Violets can be used in the home.

Branches in front of flight afford finches their place in the sun.

Gardens are for the Birds

Raymond Chesnik

EVERY GARDENER has many aims, not the least of which is to create a beautiful setting for his home. To achieve their ideal many have used pools, statuary, pavillions, and tea houses. Although an aviary is a "natural" in any garden setting, it is sadly overlooked by all but a few enthusiasts. This oversight has resulted from a lack of understanding of the simplicity with which birds, finches in particular, can be kept.

Consider then, if you will, the finch. Mr. finch is a seed eater, but he supplements his diet with garden bugs, and he also loves dandelions. In southern California many finches can winter outside. The basic seed mix is canary and millet 50/50. Other seeds may be added for variety. A feeder holding ten pounds of seed will keep a few finches about a month. If a water line is run to the flight (aviary) and a slow drip maintained, fresh water is assured. (In this climate the words flight and aviary are interchangeable.)

To minimize cleaning chores the flight should be well planted and watered often. Hang the seed feeder in a dry corner so that the seed and hulls that collect under it will not mold. Water the rest of the flight often so that stray seeds will germinate and be consumed. The stray hulls in the flight attract crawling, flying, and slithering bugs that otherwise would be eating your irises. These bugs don't survive long; it is amazing how many insects can be eaten by a bird.

A lady I know has sprinklers in her aviary timed to go on for a few minutes every morning. The plants in this flight are always fresh, and the floor has that clean yet cluttered look of the forest. Her only "routine chore" is scooping up the pile under the feeder two or three times a year.

Foliage plants for an aviary should be of small leafed varieties. Privet and pyracantha are ideal; the former grows thickly and affords protection for nests or for an afternoon siesta, while the latter's ruggedness is pleasing and produces edible berries for the birds. Mahonia, Japanese Aralia and especially Dracaena give a jungle effect, as will palms. Don't neglect the smaller bushes and various kinds of grasses.

A woodland scene shows the finch off to best advantage. To accomplish this use one or two, no more, tall bushes such as pyracantha. Everything else should be of different species in one clump or plant. Resist the temptation to use big leafed plants because they get spotted with bird droppings. Feeding dandelion or other greens at least three times a week (daily during breeding season) cuts wear and tear on the plantings.

Fresh eucalyptus branches are about the best perches one can obtain, because their strongly aromatic oil discourages bird parasites. Also fresh eucalyptus branches are resilient, and the leaves won't easily fall off. Propped in a corner they will make a fine quail nest.

All birds, captive or free, establish what is known as a "Pecking order". That is, one bird becomes king of the roost and is deferred to by all others. He is

Small plants in front and larger ones to the side complement the cage and the interior planting.

followed by a second, a third, etc, down to the last. This order is not as rigid as it sounds as there is always jockeying for position. Too, the smaller birds, being more agile in effecting escape, seem at times to hold the system in contempt. When buying mixed finches ask the dealer's advice about which are most compatible.

The types of finches are legion. Probably the smallest is the Golden Breasted Wax-bill. This irrepressible little fellow--three inches, one of which is tail--is the most delightful scape-grace I have ever encountered. He will go out of his way to bug the local bully knowing full well that he can make a faster getaway. The Golden Breasted Wax-bill is red, yellow, and brown--with intermediate shadings.

You have heard of so-and-so's basic black "little nothing"? Well, "you ain't seen nothin' till you get a gander" at the Paradise Whydah. This sparrow-like bird enters metamorphosis in the spring. Throughout the summer months you and your friends will be delighted by the spectacle of a black bird with chestnut colored bib and buff bell carrying regally behind him a train of feathers that may reach 14 inches. For brilliant colors, consider the Lady Gould or Gouldian finch! One male can rival a whole iris patch. Colors include red and black like the plushest velvet. Royal purple that would have turned Caesar green. Van Gough's own yellow! An almost irridescent turquoise and a green such as one sees in the grass that instant before the morning dew vanishes. You don't believe it? I can't blame you. The Gouldian must be seen to be believed!

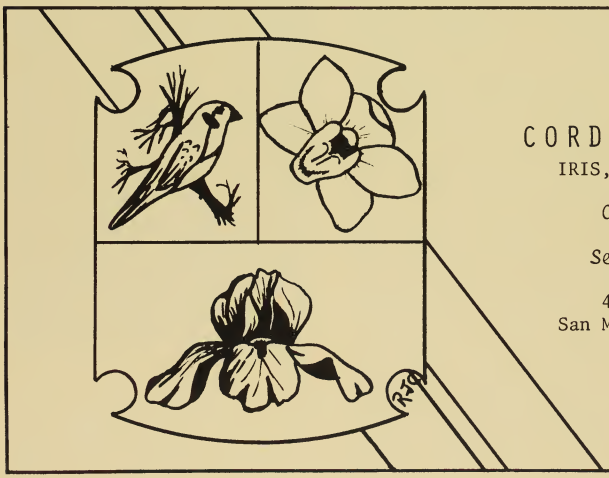
Adult Button Quail and eggs. A must with finches as they eat dropped seed.

Cordon Bleu means blue ribbon and is an apt name for a variety of finch which is light brown and sky-blue in color. Blue is a color not readily found in finches, so the Cordon Bleu is worth having if only for that reason. He is a sleek and active bird--roughly 4 1/2 inches long--and he definitely enhances any aviary.

All of these birds are either inexpensive or moderately priced; the Gouldian being the most expensive. The cost of birds, as with most things, is governed by rarity rather than beauty.

On your mark...Get set... NOW rush out and start building that garden aviary! If your garden is in the Japanese manner, how about a flight that looks like a tea house? A pagoda goes well in a rock garden. What could be more formal than a gazebo-aviary? If you have never liked the sight of the old fashioned square aviaries, why be old-fashioned?

Ray Chesnik takes care of the spuria irises and birds at the Cordon Bleu Farms. Bob Brooks tends the bearded irises and cymbidium orchids. These two ex-servicemen are developing a unique business. Visitors are invited.



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Cactus Gardening

Philip G. Corliss

PHYSICIANS have a definite handicap when they garden. Trained to succor the ailing and opposed, for the most part, to euthanasia, doctors are prone to spend too much time trying to save sick plants. They tend to include plant mortuaries and hospitals in their gardens. I find it difficult to pull out flowers that volunteer in beds that do not need them. I can bring myself to eliminate only the most noxious weeds.

There is one aspect of cactus gardening that lends itself to the healing instinct of the physician. This is the use of grafting to save weak plants. The grafted plant may not be typical of the plant as grown on its own roots. Some types of cactus grow poorly if at all in environment other than their native habitat, whereas they may flourish if grafted upon a vigorous stock.

There are many advantages to raising cactus as an hobby. Cacti will stand the neglect of long vacations much better than any other kind of plant and certainly better than animal pets. There is a limit--not much over three thousand--to the number of known cactus species. To collect the desirable, available ones is a reasonable goal.

Cacti not available from dealers or personal collecting can be added to a collection by growing them from seed. It takes in nature from five to fifty years from seed to bloom, but we can speed up this process by growing the seeds in wick-fed pans with electric cables under the soil and fluorescent lights overhead and by grafting the young seedlings. I get bloom in two years on many kinds of cactus.

When I had collected as many kinds of cactus as possible, I tried hybridizing. I am now growing hundreds of cactus hybrids of my own origination. Among the easiest and most satisfactory because of the splendid flowers is the group obtained from the South American globular cacti of the *rebutia-lobivia-echinopsis* complex. The echinopsis is the familiar "Easter Lily Cactus" which has been a popular house plant for many decades. It is a night bloomer, so I am crossing it with the day-blooming members of the *lobivia* and *rebutia* tribes to get large flowers of day-blooming habit. These hybrids are easy to raise from seed and offer little cultural difficulties.

Another group is the *neoporteria - pyrrhocactus -chileorebutia-neochilena* group of South American globular cacti. They flower well and are attractive at all seasons because of the spine color and formation.

Probably the most popular type of cactus with collectors is the mammillaria ("pin cushion" or "nipple" cactus) group. There are about 300 species and as many more "varieties" of mammillarieas, plus crests and monstrose forms of most. They are small so that even a collector with limited space may grow a large number. They flower profusely, for the most part. The color range includes white, yellow, and pink through red and purple. It is the spines that make them attractive. The spines may be brown, yellow, white, black, or red, with graduations and even multicolors. The mamillarias also include varieties with hairs and "wool". Hybridizing possibilities with this group are fascinating.

All cacti are succulents, and a cactus grower usually becomes interested in growing some succulents which are not true cacti. The western hemisphere is the home of all cacti, but the succulent euphorbias of the eastern hemisphere have developed forms which closely resemble the cactus counterparts of the western world.

During the last century the popularity of cacti has waxed and waned. I think they are on the verge of a new surge of favor as they are so adaptable to today's smaller gardens and greater leisure time for travel. I am sure that the reading of any of the good books about cactus will stimulate a rewarding interest in this most fascinating of all plant families.

Dr. Philip Corliss is a retired M.D. but he remains active in his horticultural avocation. Many of his own hybridized varieties of irises, daylilies, and cacti are on today's commercial market; he writes, too.

Wild Lilacs

Ceanothus integerrimus
(Buckthorn family)

Louise De Groot

If you would know the chaparral, you must be able to recognize the Ceanothus. The lovely blue color of many of them, the sweet, clean perfume, and the form of the flower clusters made it inevitable that they should be called Wild Lilac, though they are not a lilac at all.

In the spring of the year, it is well worth a drive into the country to see its beauty. Shrub filled canyons at the edge of the freeways will show patches of misty blue, settled on the dark green of other growth like clouds of blue smoke caught in the tangles. Then there will be more clouds, some very light blue, some darker than the sky, ranging almost to purple. The perfume is so strong, especially noticeable in narrow ravines, that it will carry even into a speeding car.

Not all our Ceanothus is blue, and a kind common in San Diego County, which is named above, is sometimes blue, often white. It is a biggish shrub, at times large enough to be a small tree, with yellowish green bark and light green leaves about as long and wide as your thumb, having three veins starting from the base. Many of the dainty, five petaled flowers make up a tapering cluster, and there are many clusters massed together on a freely blooming bush. The seed capsule, less than 1/4 inch across, is a three parted, irregular sphere, each one resting tightly into a thick cup.

Gardeners are appreciating the beauty of the Ceanothus more each year, and in Presidio Park its thick cloud of blue beauty is noticeable during the spring months.

Louise De Groot enjoys photographing and researching our native wild plants.

continuous bloom

Bob Hubley

The petal color is bluish purple and the beard is almost white. The standards of this blossom have been deflected to show the inner parts.

The photo which illustrates this article is of an iris which might look familiar, because in California it is the most widely grown of all the garden varieties of bearded irises. This iris goes by several names, but its correct name is "Eleanor Roosevelt". It was named in 1933, with the permission of the then First Lady of the Land. She personally planted many rhizomes around Warm Springs, Georgia, the favorite health resort of her husband, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Many present-day iris specialists ignore the iris "Eleanor Roosevelt". They call it "common" and "old fashioned"; they complain that it does not have the form and the substance of modern bearded irises. What they say is true, but no modern iris tolerates neglect as well as "Eleanor Roosevelt". It survives when others die. It blooms more continuously than the modern varieties. It often is the only bearded iris in bloom in gardens which boast hundreds of varieties.

In areas where gardens are dormant or frozen except during the spring and summer, there is little advantage in selecting varieties which in a warmer location would bloom in the winter. But along the Southern California coast where temperatures seldom drop to freezing one should include in the garden those iris varieties which will bloom during all seasons, even if the individual blossoms of those varieties are relatively old-fashioned in shape.

In short, it is my pet belief that if "Eleanor Roosevelt" were the only bearded iris in bloom in January, then it would be the most beautiful iris in the nation at that time. Why wait for springtime to come?

Bob Hubley is President of the Reblooming Iris Society and Show Chairman of the Southern California Iris Society. He and his wife, Ellie, live in La Mirada, and bring their reblooming irises to off-season San Diego iris shows.

IN PURSUIT OF

Sanford Roberts

A GIFT of two siblings in 1966 of a cross of the tall bearded irises Lois Craig x Edenite by irisarians Jim Watkins and Jose Rivera of Escondido, California, was the impetus needed to begin a ceaseless hobby of pollen daubing in search of a black, black-red, or near black iris that would stand up to the critical tests of the show bench, the garden, and the tastes of the iris connoisseur. Five years later, we are just as enthusiastic in the search, a bit more tired, and have enriched the compost bins with many loads of rejected seedling involving this one pursuit brought about by the gift of two rhizomes.

We had viewed most gardens in this area and always noted the lack of black or more precisely, near-black iris grown by fanciers. We didn't inquire as to why--but reasoned that either the really good iris of this color did not exist or if it was available commercially, it must not grow well in this ideal clime of Southern California. Alas, there was little time for reflection if you lived in this ideal clime and our iris did not wait for reflections.

We mentally recorded five objectives for this "black dream" as--first, vigor (easy growth and increase of plant); second, ideal branching and height; third, bud count (number of buds per bloom socket or total number of buds per stalk); fourth, substance (ability of flower to hold up under wind, hot sun, cold nights and rain ?). Remember, we also wanted this "black dream" to be acceptable by other iris growers and be grown under varying climatic conditions outside Southern California. fifth, and last--overall balance, (Is the plant and flower in balance? That is, size and relationship of height of stalk and size and shape of flower.)

We were ready to begin- two rhizomes and a dream. Little did we know it would become a painstaking year-round effort of hard work and creativity. When we say "year-round," we mean just that. All photos accompanying this article were taken by irisarian Bill Gunther in the writer's garden on February 12, 1971 (That's right, Lincoln's Birthday.) and March 15, 1971. A time of the year when one does not normally think of having iris in bloom. At least not tall bearded varieties. The actual pollinizing (or cross) that produced the seed pods in Figures 1 and 2 took place on Christmas Day 1970.

But we digress, and from the

Sanford Roberts raises Dachshunds and is editor of Dachshund Magazine. He gardens on his three acres, too, at his home at Flynn Springs.

BLACK

original cross by Watkins-Rivera of Lois Craig x Edenite we back-crossed to Lois Craig (one of the parents) and gave the cross a number of 68-7. A representative bloom of this cross is illustrated in Figure 3. We noted loss of black coloration (more red, or red-purple), but on the plus side it had better branching.

Roy Hiser, a Spring Valley hybridizer, gave us pollen from a cross of Adam x Edenite that he was growing and of a line of black that he was working. With Hiser's: Adam x Edenite pollen we crossed to the parent siblings and to the back-cross of 68-7 (64-1-3 and 74-1-4) x Lois Craig. We noted better branching, satisfactory bud count (8 and 9 buds per stalk), and particularly noteworthy was the deepening of color, with little, if any, haft markings, and blooms with standards that were tightly closed and falls that flared more horizontally than the falls in Figure 3. Figure 5 shows the clean and intense black-red color we sought and progressively better shape of bloom. Figure 5 shows desired vigor was maintained as evidenced by increase of rhizomes from one-year-old seedlings of this cross.

Of course, the iris bug had bitten hard by this time, and we had acquired about 300 named varieties. Many were relegated to compost after growing one year in this area. Others were used in pursuit of other colors, e.g., a better growing pink for this area, a deep, deep, yellow, and a fluted or ruffled deep sea-blue.

We acquired more reds and and blacks or the pollen from these and have continued in-depth work with the "black dream." In 1972 and '73 we expect to bloom the seedlings from 25 or more crosses in this line and about 25 seed pods of the same cross which will represent five generations of pollen daubing efforts.

We can cross or hybridize from mid-December until late May. Seed pods are harvested from mid-April through August. Seeds are planted about Thanksgiving Day in the open ground in seedbeds of equal parts compost, gritty soil and peat moss. The seedlings are set or lined out the following May. Come January of the following year and the tell-tale evidence of our efforts begins to show in the emerging blooms.

Figure 6 is the writer's seed bed containing 1970 crossed in early stage of germination photographed on March 15, 1971. Figure 7 is a photo taken March 15 of this year showing a bloomstalk of first generation work toward a red-bearded blue. But that's another story! Black is beautiful!

Photos by Bill Gunther.

Purples in the Vegetable Garden

Rosalie Garcia

PURPLE IS THE COLOR of passion in our culture. "I adore this with a purple passion," is a common teenage expression applied to any strong emotional choice. Passion covers all shades of feeling from the most elemental human instincts of fear, joy, and sex to the highest aspirations of the spirit, and always to the Nth degree. Now how would vegetables get into the realm of passion? They don't, except in the connotation that anything purple in hue is rich in flavor and loaded with food value. We eat with our eyes more than with any other sense. Color catches the eye first. We associate it with flavor, texture, and nutritive value. So purple is rich and delicious!

Before food chemists began to separate and evaluate vegetable components, and before diet scientists studied their food value, there was a great volume of lore, mostly superstitious, that certain vegetables and herbs aided virility and were aphrodisiacs.

Those of strong purple hues were in that category. Strangely, the paler hues of lavenders were supposed to have the opposite effects. Flowers of the lavender, an aromatic herb, padded into a young girl's clothing, or older ones, too, were preservers of chastity and thought to keep the boys in line. Times have changed, thanks to science!

In our accepted theory of color, purple is a mixture of the primary hues of red and blue. With the addition of white or black to this mixture, we have a wide range of purples, some on the reddish side and others on the blue side, some dark, some light. We have many vegetables that fall into that range of color. We can have a garden of purples.

Let's start with the cabbages--all cool weather plants that can be set out now. Many are in the nurseries about four inches high. Heads of purple cabbage have a film of white that make them iridescent and beautiful enough to grow anywhere. That bloom has faded by the time it reaches the supermarket. After the big head has been cut, leaving a part of the crown and a layer of outer leaves, a number of small rosettes will develop that are beautiful and edible. That tough rib that seemed strong and woody is not in a fresh cut head, and the shredded crispness that goes into slaw is worth all the trouble in growing it.

The purple, fringed kale, is beautiful, tougher to cook, and so ornamental and full of vitamins and minerals that it should be included. It comes easily from seeds and is perennial for several years, if the tops are kept cut out and leaves kept stripped off the bottom.

A purple cauliflower called Siciliane is available in specialty seed racks. It grows bigger and faster than the white which we know, and it turns green when cooked. Because it is more tender, (the reason it is not grown commercially) it is good eaten raw as finger food, and it is a sure fire conversation piece.

Another part-cabbage and part-turnip, the Kohlrabi, also comes in a purple variety with pale green flesh. It can be served sliced into sticks along with the cauliflower. It is better raw than cooked.

The Black Spanish Radish, long and slim, crisp and tangy, and even hot, is really a deep blue-purple, and one can plant seeds now and have radishes in six weeks.

Peppers come in purples, hot and sweet. The hot ones are usually small, from the size of a pea to three inches of concentrated fire. The tobasco, the cherry,, and the long cayenne are staples, and when mature, they are a red-purple in hue. The sweets are the cherry, the bells, and the heart shaped. The Bell-ringers and Sunnybrooks are common, and seeds are in our racks. There are also plants in the nurseries.

Purple onions are common in two fine varieties. The best for eating is the juicy, tender, flat Brunswick that has almost disappeared from our markets. It has fewer rings, very mild flavor, and a plate of slices is an appetizer and salad all to itself. Because of its juiciness, it does not keep well and is not a commercial success. We do see another in late summer which looks like it, but it is firmer, drier, and hotter, and it keeps. Seeds of the Brunswick are available from a few seed houses. The beautiful Italian Bottle onion, a violet shade and gracefully shaped enough to grace table arrangements, is slow growing but fine eating. Slices are a lavender round of close fitting rings, good for sandwiches. They are not so sweet as the Brunswick, but they keep well and are often in the markets in late summer and fall.

No garden is complete without beans, and there is a purple bean, listed as Royalty Purple. It is of the bush-type, and its round purple pods look very luscious hanging from the small bushy plants.

Beet greens are so beautifully veined in purple that it is a shame to pull them up with their purple-red roots. Beets are full of sugar and are as rich foods as the ancients thought they were. The greens are good eating, and some of the stems should be left on the

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Rosalie Garcia, our adventurous vegetable gardener, put on her seldom worn purple pants and blouse to get into the mood to write this article.

roots while cooking to keep them from 'bleeding'. If planting now, look on the packet to see if the variety is early or late, and plant the late variety, for beets are cool weather roots and toughen when the weather gets hot and dry.

Other purple roots are turnips, which have purple tops to their roots. They are very pretty while growing, for the purple part is above ground. One has to take this lovely top off to cook them, but the purple topped white, and the purple topped rutabaga both fit into this special purple garden. Plant seeds now, for they are quick growing. Thin them and eat the tender greens.

The oldest corn we know is the Black Aztec, native to Mexico, and the same that was grown 2,000 years ago. It has blue-black kernels in small ears, and in the roasting ear stage is sweet and delicious. A row of this smallish corn in the background of the garden will add height and interest.

A native winter squash known as Guatamalan Blue can climb up a wall or on a building and produce many three foot long and eight inch wide fruits that will confound all who see it. These seeds come from a long line that was grown before Columbus landed on our shores.

Rhubarb, both cherry and strawberry, are red-purples grown as vegetables and used as fruit. They are tricky to get started, either from seeds or root corms and are available in nurseries now. These corms, which should be sprouted with stubby green leaves already showing, should be planted in a well drained and sunny location. Allow them to grow at least one year before plucking the stems. Do not cut them, for the stub will rot and spoil the crown. Jerk them from the crown, and cut off the poisonous leaves. Cut the stems in segments, drop them into about an inch of water and sugar to taste, and let them heat slowly. Set them off the fire They send down a tap root as deep as two feet, need occasional, slow deep watering, and otherwise may be allowed to grow as they please. Some fertilizer in the spring will keep a plant growing for years.

A "quickie" that is ornamental, perennial, and may be used for color contrast is rhubarb chard. It looks like the curly green chard. It is tender and should be cooked quickly as greens, but it is stronger in flavor and a little tougher in texture. It combines well with other greens, and its leaf tips are very good contrast in salads, such as lining the salad bowl. The tender inner leaves are good for eating raw.

In this garden of purples one may even have the rosy-lavender potato, called red in trade circles. It is round and smooth, fine of texture, low in starch, and the best for boiling and for salads. It grows faster than the whites, and it is never starchy and mealy. When marble-sized, scraped and boiled with green peas, and served with cream, it is the harbinger of spring in many parts of the country. In the markets it is expensive, but the eyes cut from a dozen of them and planted eye-side up about three inches deep will produce the small one so delicious that my grandmother always demanded them boiled for breakfast to eat with red-eye ham gravy.

The "most purplest" of all vegetables are the egg plants. They come in yellows, whites, and striped, but the ones we think of as the real ones are purple. They come to us from India via China and through the Mediterranean; people along the way took them for their very own. The Arabs, Turks, Italians, and Spanish stuff, casserole, fry, and bake them and combine them with all sorts of meats, vegetables, and seasonings. There are plants in the nurseries now. Set them in a sunny place, keep them watered, fight the snails off, and they will bear for six months or more. The big bell-shaped ones are the common ones, but the Japanese have developed a long slim one known as Oriental or Japanese that is more delicate in flavor, with a rind so tender that it does not require peeling. They are now in our markets. One can also buy plants of them. This type holds its shape and does not become mushy, like the bells. When they are about two inches long, pick them, dip them in a tempura batter, and fry them, and you will have a morsel fit for the gods.

If this garden of purples is in a showy place, it can be dressed up with some purple blooming herbs, such as a border of Society garlic. It has an evergreen blade leaf, and in the summer it has tall stems topped with umbels of deep lavender flowers. In front of that put the "little sister" chives with its tiny lavender flowers grown the same way. One can have a border of the fragrant leafy purple basils or some lettuce-like or other fluffy plants that go well in salads and soups. Just to be really different, another side bordered with the purplish day lilies will confound many when they learn that much of that plant is edible and has long been a staple in parts of the Orient. The buds, open flowers, and roots are all good foods. The buds, nearly full-sized, steamed a few minutes and buttered, are not unlike green beans. The fresh flowers, and even the day-old ones, are good fried in batter, as are squash flowers. The tiny fresh young tubers freed of roots and fibers, boiled in salted water until tender, taste like fresh corn.

A garden of purples is admittedly contrived, but properly tended will furnish a well-rounded collection of vegetables. It will be a show stopper, make the grower someone special and distinctive, and even get one into the expert class. How about it?

Judging Tall Bearded Iris

Archie Owen

VISITORS AT IRIS SHOWS often wonder how iris judges make their decisions on awards. One reason for their wonder is the fact that the system at one show often is notably different from that at the next show.

The reasons for this variance are largely explained by the fact that some southern California iris shows are conducted under the "color classification" system while others are under the "cultivar" system. The American Iris Society authorizes use of either system, and the decision on which system will be used at a show is at the option of the particular Show Chairman who makes up the schedule for the show.

In the "color classification" system the iris specimens are grouped into classes according to the color of the flower, such as white, blue, red, etc. At a show using the color classification system the judges will select the best specimen in a color class, such as the best red, to be awarded the blue ribbon. A second, third, fourth, and sometimes an honorable mention can then be awarded in this same class. Each of the recipients may be different named varieties.

In the cultivar system all the stalks of one named variety, or cultivar, are grouped into one class and are judged against one another without competing with other than their own "tribe". In the cultivar system, the judges will determine if a specimen meets the standards for that particular named variety. If so, it may be awarded a ribbon, even though it may be the only one of that variety shown. In a cultivar show there will be no more than one blue ribbon awarded to any one variety, but there may be many varieties with blue ribbons, since each variety is judged against the standard for that named cultivar and not against other varieties of the same color.

Judges will consider a number of points in selecting a blue ribbon winner. They will look at the stalk, the flower, and the condition of the specimen. Items the judges consider when they look at the stalk are the number of open flowers--three or more is considered excellent. However, unless they are all in good condition a stalk with fewer but more perfect flowers open may be preferred.

The branching of the stalk is very important. It should be typical for the variety; should be in good proportion and well balanced; the flowers should be well displayed--not bunched. A good stalk should have two branches, a spur and a terminal at least; more if they are well arranged on the upper two-thirds of the stalk. Short toed-in branches are not good, nor are long branches that lift all the flowers to a cluster of blossoms at the top of the stalk.

The flower is what attracts most people. The color should be clear, not muddy, and should give a bright and fresh effect. The size of the flower will depend upon the variety and the conditions under which it was grown. Substance is the factor that gives crispness, stiffness, and firmness to the flower parts. Substance helps to establish the form of the flower. The form should be typical for the variety with no malformations or broken parts. A well formed flower should have good proportion between standards and falls, with the falls being wide at the haft and more flared than hanging or tucked.

The condition of the specimen at the time of judging at the show is as important as the flower or the stalk. Grooming the specimen is often neglected by the exhibitor. A fading flower, a few aphids on the petals, or spray stain can often cost the grower a blue ribbon. Flowers that are old should be carefully removed and the spathe replaced neatly. Condition of the specimen will reflect the culture under which it was grown, thus showing the skill of the exhibitor in producing a perfect specimen.

The non-bearded irises such as spurias, Siberians, Louisianas, and Japanese each have special points to be considered. However, the stalk, the flower, and condition are the prime points to be considered in judging non-bearded as well as bearded irises.

How to select a good iris.

When the criteria for selecting blue ribbon winners at shows is applied to making selections of tall bearded irises for the garden, the following may be helpful:

(1) A stalk which has good proportion, with at least two branches and a terminal. Blossoms well-spaced and displayed, not all bunched together near the top of the stalk.
(2) Color which is clear, brilliant, and rich.
(3) Good substance. No fading, no burning, no flabbiness.
(4) Falls and standards in good proportion--standards firm not floppy, a wide haft on the falls. Falls slightly flaring; not hanging and not tucked under the haft.

Archie Owen is President of the Spuria Iris Society and an Iris Judge. A well-known spuria iris variety bears her name.

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What You Always Wanted to Know About "Iris"

BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK

Rosemarie and Ed Pasahow

CONTRARY TO POPULAR opinion, irisarians do not speak a foreign language consisting of terms from Latin, genetics, and nuclear physics. But a jargon has developed around these garden plants once simply grouped under the all-encompassing category of "flags." In an attempt to bridge the floral communications gap, this list of terms is offered.

COLOR PATTERNS

Amoena: White standards with colored falls.

Bicolor: Standards are of one color and the falls are a darker color.

Bitones: Standards are a lighter shade of the same color as the falls. In a reverse bitone, the falls are lighter than the standards.

Blend: Two or more colors combined in the flower segments.

Neglecta: Light lavender standards with darker lavender or purple falls.

Plicata: White or yellow ground with edging or stippling of another color. Blue, yellow, or purple edging is common.

Self: A bloom with standards and falls of one color.

Squalens: Blended smokey blue-gray or yellow-red.

Variegata: Clear yellow standards with purple, brown, or reddish falls.

IRIS PARTS

Anther: The pollen bearing part of the stamen.

Crests: The linear ridge on the fall hafts of the crested (Evansia) irises.

Falls: Three lower petals.

Beard: Characteristic of bearded (Eupogon) irises, a growth consisting of a linear collection of hairs growing from the base of the fall.

Fan: The foliage of the individual iris rhizome.

Haft: The narrow inner portion of the standards and falls.

Ovary: The part of the pistil that after fertilization develops into the fruit containing the seeds.

Pistil: The part of the flower that forms the ovule or immature seeds, consisting of the ovary, style and stigma.

Rhizome: Horizontal thick root growth at or beneath the ground.

Stamen: The pollen bearing organs of the flower.

Standard: Three upper petals.

Stigma: The part of the pistil that receives the pollen; a lip projecting from the style branch.

Style: The part of the pistil that rises from the ovary and bears the stigma. It consists of three branches.

THE IRIS FAMILY

Apogon: Rhizomatous irises with no beard or crest.

Bulbous: Include reticulatas and xiphium. The reticulatas produce low blooms followed by long, narrow foliage which may reach 18 inches. The xiphium subgenus includes the Dutch irises frequently seen in florists plus Spanish irises and English irises.

Eupogon: True bearded irises subdivided by size such as tall, median, intermediate, border, and dwarf.

Iridaceae: Genera similar to the iris including crocus, freesia, gladiolus, and tigridia.

Japanese: A spectacular water-loving plant with tall foliage and large blooms. There are single and double varieties. Colors range from white through light blue, lavender, pink, purple, and blue-violet.

Louisiana: Native to the bayou country of southern Louisiana; up to six feet tall with large blue, purple, bronze, or white flowers possessing broad, flaring falls and upright standards.

Pacific Coast natives: Flowers are about the same size as siberians but foliage and stems are shorter. Falls often have rich veining in brown, maroon, or red. Colors include cream, apricot, golden yellow, lavender, white, or blue-violet.

Siberian: An Apogon with grassy leaves from which rise three foot stems crowned with the flowers. Standards are narrow, spoon-shaped and erect.

Spuria: An Apogon with luxuriant, long foliage up to seven feet. Flowers have long hafts; colors include combinations and shades of blue-purple, yellow, brown, and white.

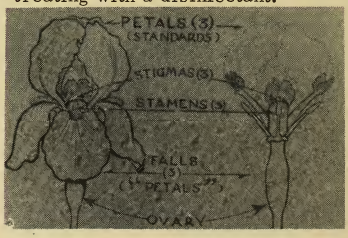
IRIS DISEASES

While normally a hardy, disease resistant plant, the iris may become infected with the following diseases:

Leaf spot: Foliage disfigured by a fungus which does not kill the plant but may be debilitating. Treatment consists of removing and burning infected foliage followed by treatment with a fungicide.

Pineappling: Occasional abortive flower stalks with no new leaf or root growth. No cure or preventive known.

Rot: A bacterial disease which causes stalks and leaves to rot at the base. Treatment consists of removing the rotten sections and treating with a disinfectant.



Ed Pasahow teaches computers while his wife, Rosemarie, teaches school. On weeksends they join forces in their outstanding backyard iris garden.

now is the time

Nibby Klinefelter

BONSAI SOCIETY

Masao Takanashi

Now is the time

to recall that watering is the most important care for your bonsai. WATER EVERY DAY at least once--more when it's hot and windy.

to be sure that your soil mix drains well.

to allow your Japanese maple to leaf out in full sun to become stronger. Leaf tips will be much less likely to burn during hot, dry weather.

to be sure to water pines and junipers in the morning for they don't like to go to bed with wet roots.

to keep moss growing for decorating and dressing up the soil for special displays. (Moss can be added two weeks before displaying for that lived-on look.)

BROMELIAD SOCIETY

Bill Knerr

Now is the time

to avoid disturbing the sideshoots on the spring-blooming Tillandsias which are coming into bloom now.

to see that the cups don't dry out--particularly when fertilizing to prevent burning.

to continue fertilizing, using one-quarter strength every 2-3 weeks now that the main growing season is approaching.

to use shredded Hawaiian treefern bark, not only as a topdressing, but to keep the roots securely anchored. A wobbly Bromeliad cannot root properly.

to avoid injuring potential growth buds when topdressing.

CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Jim Stalsonburg

Now is the time

to be out early to appreciate the night-blooming cereus--it closes shortly after first light.

to remember that cacti appreciate having their faces washed in the morning before the blooms open--splashing water can ruin the delicate texture of the petals.

to continue watering abundantly as the growing season is in full swing.

to fertilize again in late June to promote continued growth--next year's bloom will be borne from the aeroles formed this year.

CAMELLIA SOCIETY

William Gibson

Now is the time

to continue pruning, when flowers have finished blooming. Cut back to a growth bud. Trim all dead wood.

to start fertilizing lightly as soon as new growth is noticed. Cottonseed meal is recommended.

to avoid letting your plants dry out.

to plant--camellias are dormant when in bloom which is the best time to transplant, or as soon thereafter as possible.

EPIPHYLLUM SOCIETY

Ruth Nelson

Now is the time

to keep your epi's in the same position so they won't twist their little necks off following the sun.

to remember that epi's need good light to set buds. (Dr. Troxell found that from identical cuttings of the same age, those exposed to more light under a tree had twice as many blooms as those in his lath house.)

to continue to fertilize while they are setting buds.

FUCHSIA SOCIETY

James Watson

Now is the time

to continue feeding. To change fertilizer to a 5-10-10 liquid formula to stimulate blooming--particularly basket types.

to stop pinching when plants are "bushy" enough. Bush or standards need to be pinched back until they have formed enough laterals before changing to the 5-10-10.

to continue spraying with Malathion 50 as inchworms and mealie bugs are an ever-constant menace.

to see that your fuchsias don't dry out, particularly during hot windy spells.

IRIS SOCIETY

Thelma Carrington

Now is the time

to keep your iris watered. Discontinue sprinkling when flowers open to avoid water-spotting. Keep them well irrigated while blooming.

to cultivate lightly after watering, being careful to avoid damaging the surface-feeder roots which extend 2-3 feet from the main body of the plant.

to feed Spuria iris with low-nitrogen organic fertilizer.

Nibby Klinefelter is a compulsive gardener who loves plants. She is editor of Espinas y Flores but finds time to contact all of our affiliates for this Calendar of Care.

-a cultural calender of care from our affiliates-

to feed the Japanese and Louisiana iris with liquid fish.

to give the tall bearded iris a well balanced fertilizer with all the trace elements.

to consider leaving the spent Louisiana iris flowers to dry naturally into pods to use in dry arrangements.

ORCHID SOCIETY

Ione Maloney

Now is the time

to repot cattyleas that have roots running over the sides of the pots.

to first take them outside where you can wash off the old potting mix with a good stream of water from the hose.

to cut away the old brown roots, using a fungicide or treehealer mix on the cut portions to prevent disease.

to divide, leaving 3-4 pseudo-bulbs to each division.

to mix 1/2 redwood bark, 1/2 fine redwood orchid potting mix--add 1 cup perlite to a gallon pot.

to soak mix by putting it in laundry basket and spraying the hose through it to remove loose "dust", then immersing basket in tub. Soak overnight, drain well and pot.

to disinfect pots by soaking overnight (or at least several hours) in a tub of water to which one cup of household bleach has been added.

to consider using plastic pots (as Ione does) if you have never tried them.

to divide cymbidiums if the bulbs are crowded and hanging over the edge. Remove "back bulbs" from center, using 2-3 to a pot. Use fresh cymbidium potting mix which is available at your local nurseries.

ORGANIC GARDENING

Paul Canady, Sr.

Now is the time

to try "instant compost" using a heavy black plastic bag with the usual ingredients layered in it. The contents should be damp enough for bacterial action to start, but not so damp as to rot. Tie the bag tightly and turn it over every three to four days. Compost should be ready in two weeks.

to try a "mini instant compost", substituting a double layer of the large plastic garbage-barrel liners.

to plant nasturtiums among the tomatoes and cucumbers to repel the white fly.

to plant petite French marigolds to repel aphids.

ROSE SOCIETY

Marie White

Now is the time

to plant the last of this year's roses, container grown.

to spray at one or two-week intervals. Marie uses Black leaf-40 for insects; Actidione PM for powdery mildew; Karathane or Benlate for scale and black spot; Cygon 2-E for mites and Cygon or Seven for thrips.

to feed every 3-4 weeks with any of the commercial rose foods. Marie advocates rotating liquid with dry.

to be sure that the soil doesn't dry out.

to mulch; planter mix and steer manure combined make a good mulch. Be careful not to let the steer touch the canes.

to disbud hybrid teas for larger flowers. The time to disbud is as soon as you see them.

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Corey Hogewoning, Prop.

California Wild Iris

Joe Ghio

"Pacificas" thrive in our gardens because this area is their native wild habitat. The evergreen foliage is attractive the year around. At blossom time the flowering clumps are a special delight. (Left) - (Right) The graceful stalks and pastel blossoms are wonderful for making arrangements.

WILD IRISES IN CALIFORNIA? It might well come as a surprise to many that California has a plethora of iris species growing within its borders. It even gave its name to a class of irises, Californicae. Wild irises grow in vast abundance in California,

America's hybridizers have ignored our wild irises until very recently. It is in England that our native irises found a waiting public, with several active hybridizers working to improve their color, form, and growth.

Most of our wild irises belong to the class, Californicae, but are commonly referred to under a multitude of names including Pacific Coast, PC's, Western Natives, Pacificas, and just plain "natives".

The commonly grown Pacificas are generally derived from *Iris innominata* and *Iris douglasiana*, with another half dozen species less commonly used. Pacificas are ever-green, with grasslike foliage reaching an average of 12 inches in height. Flower stalks range from 10-20 inches. These irises have an expanding color range: Purple, blue, red tones, brown, rose, yellow, white, and bicolor. With an increasing number of hybridizers working with them, more and more named varieties are available. Pacificas' best bloom occurs in early April.

Transplanting can be a tricky matter, but success is high if it is done as the new growth begins --soon after the first fall rains. Best transplanting time is between mid-October to late December.

Plant Pacificas in a spot which gets afternoon shade. The soil should approximate their native habitat which is on the acid side. Prepare a bed by working in plenty of leaf mold and other organic compost at least six weeks before you plan to plant your irises. Do not clip any of the roots, and plant them only as deep as their normal growth indicates. Once planted, keep them quite wet until established. Established plants need not be transplanted for years, each clump becoming more spectacular with every passing year. So plan now to add a few of these delicate beauties to your garden this year. You won't regret it.

Joe Ghio, owner-operator of Bay View Gardens, is an iris hybridizer and a popular speaker on the "iris banquet circuit". He spends his leisure time teaching school.

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The Royal Sign

Josephine Gray

SINCE HIGH AND FAR OFF DAYS, the sign of a king was his purple robe, and dire penalty was put upon a commoner caught wearing anything purple. I don't remember whether it was his head he lost or whether he only had his ears lopped, but I venture there were few who experimented. Purple dye, made from a small shellfish, was expensive and rare. Purple flowers and herbs have had the dignity of royalty conferred upon them, even the unassuming violet. We buy Royal Robe violets in evidence of it.

In England during the Middle Ages before vegetables were brought to the island from the continent, many of our flower garden plants were found in their herb gardens for use as food or drink or medicine. They lightened their fare of rich and heavy pastys and bloody haunches of beef with 'sallets' of violet and nasturtium leaves. Gerard tells us they made sweets of violets and sugar "which is most pleasant and wholesome, especially it comforteth the heart and other inward parts." In old herbals I find a number of plants which are recommended to comfort the heart, and since our times are about as troubled as theirs were, I think maybe we should try them out instead of smiling gently at the quaintness of expression.

"Anything green that grew out of the mould" says Kipling, "Was an excellent herb to our fathers old." Violet flowers were good for inflammations, especially of the sides and lungs; "they take away the hoarseness of the chest; the ruggedness of the winde-pipe and jawes, and take away thirst." The difficulty with a lot of these old recipes is that they don't tell you how to do it. Sometimes they tell you to stampe the floures or leaves with sugar and faire water, or sweet oyle or clear wine. Then you do know you drink it, and maybe that's what you do for a rugged wind-pipe. I do know that violets taste like they smell, sweet and refreshing. I have a friend whom I have to watch when he visits, for he would eat my whole violet patch.

During the Restoration William Cole wrote a little book called The Art of Simpling in which he says "among the plants which cool and moisten the head are Violets which provoke sleep and allay the acrimony of choler." In other words, when you get good and mad, put a poultice of violet leaves on your forehead and lie down. He goes on to say that outwardly applied "they cool the head, for they refresh the braine with their sweet odour, and drive away vapors from thence."

However, we don't have to hark back to the Middle Ages to find violet recipes; I have at hand 15 which range from cooked greens through salads, tea, lemonade, vinegar, and ending up with them candied. For example, I'll give you a salad.

> Crisp new violet leaves in ice water. Drain and combine with chopped water-cress and endive torn in big pieces. Add 1 tbsp. each, chopped fresh dill, green onions or chives, and nasturtium buds (if available). Season with garlic salt and coarsely ground black pepper. Toss with olive oil and lemon juice, being sure oil coats each leaf. Garnish with purple violets and crumbled yolk of hard-boiled egg. And as the medieval cook books have it, serve him forth.

Violets like a rich soil but are long-suffering and will grow almost anywhere. For some reason, most of us believe that they like shade, but this isn't true. Royal Robe, particularly, must have full sun or it doesn't bloom at all. I had a patch of them for three years in complete shade, and they had gorgeous leaves but no blossoms at all until I moved some of them to a sunny position. Some will take part shade, particularly afternoon shade, and in the hot summers they must be well mulched while they rest. They must not dry out completely, though you do cut down on water.

Give them bone meal and soil sulphur and lime twice a year. About a month before blooming and every six weeks during their bloom time feed them fish emulsion. They will bloom for you from December until the end of March or April. My garden note book for December says 'Violets are glorious: enormous blossoms on long stems, and so fragrant that the whole atmosphere is sweet along the front walk.' Also I might add that they have spit their seeds across the walk and the lawn has little purple pools all over it. We mow when the time comes and it doesn't hurt them at all.

I give you violets, "sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes" and royal enough to match a king!

Josephine Gray researches, grows, and uses herbs. Her garden in Rancho Santa Fe is a delight.

Growing in Garbage Cans

John E. Miller

FOR THIS TYPE OF GARDENING one needs the following material:

1. Garbage cans. (I use 20 gallon, galvanized ones.)
2. Dirt. (Sandy loam is best.)
3. Sand.
4. Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss.
5. Fertilizer. (I like sludge products or rabbit or cow manure.)
6. Lime or granite dust.
7. Hammer and screw driver.
8. Three pound coffee can.

Now if I have left anything out, I apologize ahead of time.

We started garbage can gardening because we are renting and plan to take our crop with us if we ever move. (If you ever see a large trailer going down the street with garbage cans filled with trees and other crops, it may be us!)

To prepare the cans, turn them upside down and make about five holes using the screw driver and hammer. These are for drainage. Turn the can upright.

Make a planting mix of dirt, sand, peat moss, and fertilizer. Add a dusting of lime or granite dust and mix thoroughly. (As I am a seaweed gardener, I add a bit of seaweed.)

For this type of gardening one should sterilize the soil before making the mix. One method is to take small amounts of the soil and pour boiling water on it. Large pans of the soil can be placed in 250° oven overnight, too.

Next, take the top and bottom out of a 3 pound coffee can. Place the coffee can inside the garbage can, on the bottom, about in the middle. Fill the coffee can with sand to the top. Place soil around the outside of the coffee can up to the top. Gently lift the coffee can up. This will leave a center of pure sand for drainage. Place the coffee can in the center of the garbage can again, fill the coffee can with sand and place soil around the can until it is level with the top. Lift out the coffee can and repeat the whole process until the garbage can is filled to within three inches of the top.

Two by four boards placed underneath the cans make it easy for one to tip the can and roll it to another spot.

I have placed a layer of flattened tin cans in the bottom of a garbage can before I added soil. (Take ends out and mash flat.)

I put my trees and plants to soak before planting. If trees are dry, I soak them from three days to a week. Next, I plant in the dry soil in the garbage can. Then I wet thoroughly, until water runs out the bottom. I wait a few hours and repeat the watering, making sure that the soil is firm around the plant.

One should be careful to pick dwarf or semi-dwarf trees. Plant one tree to a pot. Sometimes my wife comes along and plants flowers, garlic, and onions around the trees. Nasturtiums, marigolds, onions, and chives planted around the trees will keep pests away. We grow apple, peach, pear, grapefruit, and orange trees in garbage cans. We have a crop of eleven asparagus plants in another can. Tomatoes and corn do well, too. I wrap the cans in a foil wrap so too much heat doesn't get to the roots.

Worms should be introduced into the cans, too. I add at least 100.

This type of gardening should be ideal for one with physical problems. No stooping required. The high-rise dweller with a cement terrace can now enjoy a small grove or vegetable garden. Even those with poor soil might find this one way they can grow trees. Anyone can be a garbage can gardener!

John Miller is an organic gardener who is constantly experimenting with new ideas and new methods of gardening without chemicals.

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Lilliput Arrangements

Shirley Jackson

"LIFE IS MADE UP OF LITTLE THINGS", to quote an unknown author. And so it is with flower arrangements. The miniature arrangement takes patience, skill, and imagination, but the rewards can be worth the effort.

Use everything from buttons and bits to grandmother's favorite tiny teacup and saucer for containers. Search from seashore to mountain top for material and put the whole family in the act on week-end excursions. The search for the unusual is the flower arranger's challenge and delight.

As far as line, color, texture, and scale are concerned in miniatures, the rule is the same as for the regular sized arrangement; it is just reduced in scale to fit a three to six inch over-all measurement for miniatures. The most important rule is to have your material in the right proportion to the tiny container you are using. Keep in mind that a twig can be a tree, a leaf a bush, and a small rock a mountain. A viola is usually too large. A single flower from a cluster flower or a succulent flower are ideal. Keep figurines and accessories in the right proportion to them. (If you are doing one for competition in a Flower Show, keep a ruler on hand while arranging.) Generally, miniatures look better on a base.

There are a few tricks to remember in using mechanics for miniatures. For moisture in tiny arrangements, try using a half of a grape which serves as a pin frog as well. Use an eye dropper to add water to your container and tweezers to place that certain flower in the right position.

For the mobile home, the small apartment, or a get-well gift at the hospital, where space is limited, the miniature can be a capsule of joy.

Three inch landscape scene.

Tweezers with tiny containers. Compote crossed with waterproof tape; cup with piece of oasis.

Shirley Jackson, a member of the La Jolla Garden Club, demonstrates miniature arrangements to clubs throughout San Diego County.

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Iris Festival

Helen Ard

IN A LAND of countless festivals, where celebrations are held for any and all possible reasons, the Iris Festival (Shobu-no-Sekku) is one of the most enthusiastically anticipated national holidays of Japan. And why should it not be, as it is synonymous with Boys' Day, the joyous annual salute to the sons of each proud family throughout the land?

Kofu School arrangement. Maple, Iris, driftwood in large flat container.

On the fifth day of the fifth month, May 5th, the fete of Boys' Day (Tango-no-Sekku) is heralded across the Japanese islands from the most humble village to the world's largest city of Tokyo. In this land of ikebana the traditional use of iris (shobu) to pay tribute to the sons of the family is but one aspect of this happy occasion, and in every home one finds an arrangement with this flower. What better flower to use than the Japanese iris to express the family's pride in its sons? Like the Samurai sword of old, its long, sharp-pointed blades are flat and its shape so closely resembles the feared weapon. The flower itself rises towards heaven, standing straight and tall. It symbolizes fearlessness and strength, purity, and innocence, attributes of manliness desired in sons. The iris allegedly can instill a warrior spirit, so on this special day the boys bathe in an iris hot-bath hoping to attain in manhood a strong mind and body. Even the special wooden sword used on this day is known as the "iris sword".

In addition to the traditional iris arrangement in the alcove, carp of cotton, silk, or even paper rise high on bamboo poles outside the home. There may be five, six, or even seven of these floating fish, each representing one boy member of the family, from the biggest fish (15 feet or more) for the oldest son down to a tiny carp for the baby. It is a most impressive and memorable sight to come upon an entire village with an enormous school of colorful fish swimming high in the wind. These carp are symbolic of courage and strength, and because of their great power and determination to swim upstream and even jump waterfalls, they are fine examples for man-children to emulate.

On this holiday family heirlooms of armor, Samurai helmets, warrior-dolls, and weapons are proudly brought forth and specially arranged on shelves in the tokonoma (alcove) along with the iris arrangement.

The Japanese iris is a dignified flower, and in ikebana it is usually combined with materials in keeping with this characteristic. It should be arranged naturally and should not be used with heavy floral shapes or gay colors. It is available during all four seasons in Japan and is widely used in arrangements of all kinds. It is often used by itself with no additional material in a formal boat arrangement and is especially effective in a "fish path" arrangement. (two-part water arrangement where there is a "path" for the fish to swim through.) The "fish path" style is arranged in two parts using a large, low shallow container with two different water plants or with one flowering "water plant" such as the iris. The cooling effect is most refreshing!

Although the Japanese iris is so versatile and widely used, it is perhaps one of the most difficult materials for the beginner to arrange. In ikebana there are many complicated rules governing its use. One of note is that the leaves should be placed flat facing the viewer, not with the sharp edge toward the front. It is said that the blade resembles the Samurai sword and if the sharp edge is placed toward the front, it hints of hostility and dangerous intrigue toward the viewer!

Remember to treat your Japanese iris with the dignity and respect they are due when you arrange them for your Boys' Day Festival on the fifth day of the fifth month!

Helen Ard is a Master of the KOFU School of Ikebana. She spent several years in Japan.

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THE BOOK SHELF

Rhododendrons and Azaleas. Sunset Editorial Staff, Philip Edinger is the editor of this book. Lane Books, Menlo Park, California. 1969. $1.95. 80 pages.

This is another of those handy Sunset Guides, beautifully illustrated with photographs and drawings. Everything you will want to know about acquiring and planting rhododendrons and azaleas and keeping them thriving is here.

Over one hundred rhododendrons and even more azaleas are listed in the charts of varieties at the back of the book. They are separated first into color groups, then listed alphabetically by name with plant characteristics and season of bloom given. Deciduous azaleas are listed in a separate section in the last chart.

Many suggestions for using these plants in landscaping and in containers are discussed and illustrated. Chapters on pruning and training and one on propagation are also given. The three page chart of diseases and pests is sure to tell you what is wrong with your ailing plant as well as what to do about it.

The first chapter, "Meet the rhododendron clan" gives a brief history of the plant family and where it has been found. Greek and Roman soldiers found that honey made from the nectar of the Pontic Azalea was dangerously toxic. Development of the plants to the present day is discussed.

This is a good addition to the Sunset Garden books and one that gardeners will want to own.

Reviewed by Doris Blick

Phil Edinger, the Editor of the book which is reviewed above, is a writer by vocation - but he is an irisarian by avocation. In his garden is the largest collection of historic irises in California

Doris Blick is a City Librarian who loves plants. She is our Floral Assn. Librarian, too.

Purple Trees?

George Bremner

TO A GREATER OR LESSER DEGREE, purple in the garden is in the eye of the beholder. Discussions can wax loud and long over whether JACARANDA ACUTIFOLIA is blue, lavender, or light purple. With this in mind, we'll call everything from reddish-blue to bluish-red a shade of purple. These colors can be used with happy effect when combined with the right background and/or underplanting, or can have a very disturbing effect when used incorrectly. The aforementioned jacaranda underplanted with yellow pansies is quite a different cup of tea from a purple leafed plum behind a bed or red cannas! So use care in the surroundings of these trees and obtain symphony instead of cacophony.

The color comes either in the blossoms which, of course, would be seasonal, or foliage, which would be of much longer duration and in some cases, perpetual. Let's consider the blossom type first.

BAUHINIA VARIEGATA, Purple Orchid Tree, blooms in early spring from January to April. The individual blossoms are two to three inches wide and bloom on a rather bare tree, as the lobed leaves fall in winter. Both this and the Hong Kong Orchid Tree would like to grow as many-stemmed shrubs and must be pruned to single stems and staked to form trees. It grows to about 25 feet maximum and is hardy to 22°F.

George Bremner, Floral's treasurer, is a dentist and an avid gardener.

BAUHINIA BLAKEANA, or Hong Kong Orchid Tree, has a brighter and larger blossom--to about five and one-half inches. Those I have seen do not seem to be quite so prolific with bloom as the more common purple, but make up the difference in brilliance. Bloom time for these is autumn, on nearly bare branches. It is a slightly smaller tree than B. PURPUREA topping out at about 20 feet maximum.

CALODENDRUM CAPENSE, or Capechestnut, is a real beauty when well grown. In late spring or early summer bouquets a foot high of one and one-half inch lilac flowers protrude all over a broad crowned 25-40 foot medium green large leafed tree.

CEANOTHUS ARBOREUS, Feltleaf Ceanothus, is a California native that will do rather well in the garden as a large shrub or small tree to 25 feet. It blooms in spring with other wild lilacs and is more on the blue than really purple coloring.

CHORISIA SPECIOSA, the Floss-silktree, comes in a purplish blooming form as well as the more familiar pinkish. This tree is fairly common in our area (San Diego), but it should never be planted in a lawn or it will be overwatered. It needs good drainage and a place for size as it will eventually grow to 50 feet high and 30 feet wide.

JACARANDA ACUTIFOLIA is probably the best known flowering tree in the San Diego area. Leafless from February or March, the large clusters of two inch flowers quite literally cover the irregularly shaped head in May-June. Sometimes the leaves are out, sometimes not by this time. Seed pods are nice in arrangements. It grows 25-40 feet high and is hardy to about 20 feet. Altogether it is lovely, but it can be messy during bloom season if over a patio or driveway.

LAGERSTROEMIS SPECIOSA, Queen Crapemyrtle, is a large tree in its homeland--to 60 feet --but here it grows as a shrub or small tree to 20 feet. It has large clusters of large lavender flowers in late summer. It is not quite so mildew prone in zones 22-24 as the L. INDICA which does well in the dryer inland climates. I understand the mildew problem can be licked by spraying just before blooming, but my time and temper didn't hold out, so the plant was chucked before many seasons passed.

MAGNOLIA SOULANGEANA (Burgundy) has beautiful large blossoms early in the season which are purple from the center halfway to the tips. The tree is small--to 25 feet--and blooms at an early age. Some real beauties are in the Japanese Tea Garden in San Francisco.

MELIA AZEDARACH, or Chinaberry, is of the same family as the Texas unbrella tree but prettier. It is a medium sized tree of 40 feet and rather spreading and has clusters of lilac summer flowers. It has the lia-

bility of bearing poisonous yellow berries.

PAULOWNIA TOMENTOSA, Empress Tree, gives a nice tropical effect with its large leaves on a tree reminding one of the catalpa. Deciduous, the flower buds form in autumn but don't open until spring with big clusters of fragrant lilac flowers. It is rather messy from flower and leaf drop. Buds may fall if the winter is too mild or it may freeze when too cold. The dense shade and many surface roots make it impossible to garden or have lawn under this tree.

TABEBUIS IPE is a 30 foot tree with clusters of two to four inch lavender trumpets having white throats with yellow marking. Blooms appear in late winter and sometimes again in late summer.

Following are some purple foliaged trees you might like. As in all cases, check your zone for adaptability.

ACACIA BAILEYANA PURPUREA is an interesting variation of the most familiar acacia. It has some faults and virtues but has the added interest of the new foliage being purple. The more pruning is done to encourage new growth, the longer the new growth can be kept coming, so for this reason it is often grown as a shrub. When grown as a tree, water it deeply and infrequently to encourage deeper rooting, otherwise the heavy tops may cause uprooting when the winds and rains come. Life expectancy is not over 30 years, but fast early growth makes up some of the difference.

ACER PLATANOIDES, 'Crimson King', is a maple good only in the colder areas, but it is very beautiful where it can be grown, holding its deep purple color all through the season.

COTINUS COGGYGRIA (RHUS COTINUS), Purple Smoke Tree. The new leaves are purple gradually turning green. As the greenish flowers fade they become puffs of purplish "haze" or "smoke" giving the common name. Variety 'Royal Purple' retains the purple leaves all season and has the same puffs of "smoke". This is a plant that will rot out with too much tender, loving care. A fast drainage and infrequent watering in poor rocky soil is its forte.

EUGENIA UNIFLORA is usually thought of here as a hedge, but it makes a very neat little tree of about 20 feet when grown as an individual speciman. New growth is a lively shade, and the purplish fruits can be an asset for color and jelly or a liability when used as ammunition by the children.

DODONAEA VISCOSA PURPUREA, the Purple Hop Bush, is a widely planted shrub that makes a beautiful small tree to 15 feet or so when trained to a single stem. The variety 'Saratoga' is always a beautiful color, while seedlings vary in intensity of coloring. It is one of the natives from our neighbor, Arizona. The bush takes nearly any soil and tolerates either drought or moisture, ocean or desert.

MALUS PURPUREA ALDENHAMENSIS is a crabapple with nice purplish leaves and the added benefit of purple bark on the twigs. Its blooms are large and dark red. There's sometimes a bonus blooming in the fall. Variety 'Royalty' is another beauty. Here again the zoning best be watched unless you are one of the pioneering kind who is willing to risk failure for the chance of having something different.

PRUNUS CERASIFERA ATROPURPUREA, purple leaf plum, grows fast to about 25 feet in a nicely rounded form. Variety 'Krauter Vesuvius' is smaller than 'Atropurpurea', growing to about 18 feet, but the leaves are darker, and it is nearly non-fruiting which makes for a better patio or street tree. They can be held in a large tub or planter for several years. PRUNUS CISTENA is a dwarf red-leaf plum.

I'm sure you might have others, and a very comprehensive list can be found in Roland Hoyt's great book "Ornamental Plants for Subtropical Regions", so just pick your purple and God bless.

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Some exciting plants in Jamaica

Alex D. Hawkes

FOR SEVERAL YEARS NOW, I have spent much of my time in the Caribbean island nation of Jamaica. Here I have found a new home amongst the pleasant people, the stupendous scenery of green mountains and rushing rivers, and the everchanging floral displays, these representative of both indigenous and cultivated species.

A considerable proportion of the annual thousands of visitors who come to our island are interested in plants and gardening. It matters not which time of year one visits Jamaica, for there is always something going on in the way of incredible huge flowering trees, fantastic shrubs and vines, and even showy roadside herbaceous weeds. Our botanical gardens, from Hope to Bath to Cinchona to Castleton, all have their special international appeal, and our montane tree-fern forests draw serious botanists from all parts of the globe.

Gardening aficionados have much to relish in this country. As three rather diverse examples, I accompany these random notes with a famous tree, a commonly-cultivated floriferous shrub which should do well in many parts of California, and one of the most extraordinary tropical flowering vines in the world.

Firstly, let us consider the Teak Tree (*Tectona grandis*). Teak wood is, of course, world-famed for its tremendous weight and durability. Many years ago, Teak trees were introduced from Burma and India into Jamaica, as a potential timber crop. They thrive here, and sizeable plantings of them are to be found in many parts of the country. The trees are splendid towering specimens, the young foliage gigantic and sandpaper-rough in texture. And when in bloom, as shown in my illustration, taken at the Jamaica Government show-place of Devon House, Kingston (technically St. Andrew), the immense inflorescences are indeed breath-taking, and afford the close viewer a surprising experience by their scent.

Around Christmas time, most of the lowland gardens and parks of Jamaica burst into white bloom with our Snowflake *Euphorbia leucocephala* a close ally of the poinsettia from Middle America, which I suspect would thrive in many parts of Southern California, though I do not recollect encountering it during my residence there years ago. My photograph shows a grand bank of these Snowflakes with Dr. John Claver Cargill, in his interesting gardens near Stony Hill. The individual inflorescences of this Euphorbia vary in subtle hues from pink to dead-white, the latter hue being most common in our Jamaican clones, which were introduced here some years ago from Costa Rica. We also have the same species as a relative rarity in Florida, introduced by

Dr. Alex D. Hawkes is a noted botanist and horticulturist and a gourmet cook. He has authored 6 cook books, 2 plant books, and thousands of articles. He divides his time between homes in Florida and Jamaica.

Mr. Renford Douglas admires commercial Teak in full blossom at Devon House, Kingston, Jamaica.

Dr. J. C. Cargill with Snowflake.

me from Nicaragua, and with more pronounced pink coloration of the bracts surrounding the tiny central flowers, just the same structure as a diminutive Poinsettia. The bushy shrub thrives in dry, hot districts, doing its best in poor soils fully exposed to our tropic sun. It is very readily propagated either by seed, this abundantly produced, or from mature cuttings--each stem often breaking itself up into neat lengths for rooting and replanting! We often use it as a marvelous pot or tub specimen, bringing it into prominence during its prime season (which may last two months), from our growing areas.

My third illustration shows a floral raceme of the truly incredible Jade Vine *Strongylodon macrobotrys* a very heavy leguminous species from the Philippines. This is seen in the private garden of Mrs. Paul Bovell, St. Andrew, Jamaica, displayed by the adept gardener. Mrs. Bovell's specimen of this justifiably famed tropical vine, notably difficult both of propagation and growth in the past, this year bore literally dozens of three-foot inflorescences, each tightly packed with heavy, waxen blossoms. These are colored a most extraordinary shade of bluish-green jade, overlaid on a yellowish green base, while the slender upcurving beak is a pale blue-green which I cannot recollect seeing in any other flower, except a few kinds of orchids.

The Jade Vine requires a heavy pergola or trellis, so that the strongly pendent floral racemes can hang down and develop to their fullest. Interestingly, we have discovered just recently that this species of Strogylodon is very easily propagated, when even tip-cuttings are put into a mist propagator! And further, the husky, handsome, dark-leaved vine seems very adaptable to soil conditions, provided it is afforded ample water while in active growth, a sunny situation, high temperatures throughout the year, and enough space to ramble about, as is its habit. Although discovered in 1854, it has only recently been cultivated successfully.

There are so many horticultural and botanical delights to be seen by visitors to Jamaica that

Jade Vine in the garden of Mrs. Paul Bovell, St. Andrew, Jamaica.

I could write a book about them. In fact, I am doing so! Interested persons from CALIFORNIA GARDEN are most welcome to this lovely island, and will be afforded a memorable sojurn. Data regarding special gardens and indigenous horticultural-botanical sights can be had upon request from the Jamaica Tourist Board, Attn: Miss Marcella Martinez, 78 Harbour Street, Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies, or from tourist agents in your city.

Come out and see us, some time very soon, will you?

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IRIS PRIMER

THE WORD "IRIS", in Greek, means "rainbow". The name of the rainbow was given to the genus because of the great range in color of its flowers. Botanically, there are over two hundred species in the genus Iris; these species are grouped into a number of main types, which are called series. Notes on the most important of the iris series follow:

TALL BEARDED irises are the most familiar of garden varieties. The bloomstalks average about two feet in height; the blossoms are relatively large; the petals are wide; and a hairy "beard" grows vertically along the center of each of the lower three petals of the blossom. About a dozen wild species of the tall bearded iris series are native to the Mediterranean area; no bearded irises are native to America. Garden varieties are hybrids developed from crosses between the species. They are called "cultivars", a word which is derived from the words "cultivated varieties". Other bearded iris series include the intermediates, dwarfs, oncos, and regelias. Irises in these other bearded categories are not readily adaptable to average garden conditions in the coastal area of California.

Iris bulleyana a species classed in the Siberian series, has blossoms about two inches in diameter. The lower petals are of an off-white color, overlaid with greyish purple veining. The stem is hollow, and about two feet in height. Plants of this species do well in home gardens.

SPURIA irises are beardless; the wild spuria species are native to large areas of Europe, Russia, and Asia Minor. They range in size from a few inches to five feet tall. In the last 80 years Hybridizers have been utilizing selective breeding procedures to develop beautiful hybrids, which under favorable conditions grow to six feet tall.

PACIFIC COAST irises are a beautiful series of eleven species with foliage averaging less than a foot in height. They are called Pacific Coast irises because they are native only to the three Pacific Coast states of the USA. There are many hybrids which are crosses between two or more of the species. These irises are ideal garden subjects because through evolution they have become adapted to the environmental conditions of this area.

LOUISIANA irises are a series of about seven species of swamp irises which are native to the bayou and delta regions of Louisiana and Mississippi. These species grow in close proximity in nature, and natural hybrids are plentiful in the wild. Many of these hybrids have been named, registered, and introduced, but were natural hybrids which were found in the swamps and brought home for garden use. Louisiana irises grow well in California if planted in an area which is kept continually moist or soggy.

SIBERIAN irises. A very distinctive series of species which are native to Europe and China. These irises have relatively small and delicate blossoms which bloom at the tip of very slim but tall stems. The foliage is more grass-like than iris-like. The Siberians (like the spurias and the Pacific Coast irises) are "apogons"; this means that they are beardless. There are about eight different Siberian iris species.

JAPANESE irises. In Manchuria, Korea, and Japan a wild iris species grows which is botanically designated as *Iris kaempferi*. For over five hundred years Japanese gardeners have been domesticating this species. They have developed variant "forms" of this species, through line breeding. There now exist very many colors, shapes, and sizes of garden varieties of Japanese irises-all of them being forms of the single species *Iris kaempferi*. Japanese irises require acid soil, a rather continuous supply of nutrients, and a rather continuous supply of moisture. When these requirements are provided, they perform beautifully in California.

BULBOUS irises. The bulbous irises, as the name implies, are distinguished from other iris types by the fact that they grow from true bulbs rather than from the modified root-form which is called a rhizome. The bulbous series include SPANISH irises (all of which are special forms of the single species *Iris xiphium*), DUTCH irises (which are hybrids between *Iris xiphium* and one or more other species), ENGLISH irises (all of which are special forms of the species *Iris xiphioides*) and RETICULATA irises (which are tiny species with bulbs which are "reticulated", or covered by a net-like sheath.)

Bill Gunther

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A FAREWELL COMMENT by the SAN DIEGO FLORAL PRESIDENT.....

Whew! The two years of being President of the San Diego Floral Association is almost over. At the end of my journey, I would like to share some of my observations.

I firmly believe that it is to the good of all garden clubs to seek new members and to encourage those who will serve. New members bring with them new ideas; they are enthusiastic and they do not have "old axes to grind".

Garden clubs, large and small, have an assortment of human beings. For the most part the garden club has a rather healthy atmosphere. Human aggressions have been gotten rid of by stomping snails, killing lice, and eradicating weeds. Most members come to a meeting ready to learn and to cooperate with kindred souls. Officers and members should see that "fair play" and courtesy are a part of every garden club. Don't let a few frighten others away.

Officers and presidents are necessary; in some clubs directors also. Many feel that the honor is not in a title but in a job well done. Being positive and good natured helps in the smooth functioning of a meeting. Respect for other people and their opinions seems very necessary.

"Deadwood" is frequently used to refer to a worthless person in office. Most garden clubs have a touch of it occasionally. It is sad when a person does not resign from a position which is not being properly filled.

The San Diego Floral Association is not an ordinary garden club; it is the oldest and largest in San Diego and in the Southwest. It is responsible for much of the beautification in Balboa Park. It has fostered the organization and growth of many other garden clubs and plant specialty societies. It has had a positive voice in the community. Worthwhile citizens have always been members and officers.

The membership supports CALIFORNIA GARDEN, the oldest horticultural magazine in continuous publication in the United States. The greatest efforts of the organization have gone toward financing and promoting the magazine. At times debt has avalanched, but today we seem to be directed toward sound financial practices: no great surplus, but no staggering debt either. Subscriptions have increased by 25% in the past two years.

A President must keep trying the impossible. Inspiration will find roots that hope alone can not foster....

A smile in the name of San Diego Floral will make us a friend, and if you have smiled and offered friendship in our name...thank you ! If you have done a task...thank you. If you have given a subscription...thank you. If you enjoy being a member...thank you. And a very special thanks to the fellow officers and the Board of Directors and the magazine editors for cooperating in what we have accomplished together. My cup runneth over.

Virginia M. Inniss

BOB SCHREINER, one of the world's leading irisarians, has his headquarters in Oregon. He will be in San Diego as dinner speaker and guest-of-honor at a Regional meeting of the American Iris Society.

We asked Bob about the beginning of his interest in irises. "I have enjoyed being with the irises ever since I was a grade school boy in the 1920's. I started hybridizing early. Actually, the first cross I made was when I was in the sixth grade--crossed the varieties VICTORINE and SHAKESPEARE. I named everyone of the seedlings I raised (12) after the neighbors. I do not know if I liked my neighbors or not!"

Bob studied genetics at the Univeristy of Minnesota, after which he and his brother, Bernard, combined forces to carry on the iris hybridizing and iris commercializing which had been initiated by their father.

The story of their work and advancements are told in the pages of the Schreiner iris catalogues which have been issued during each of the last 45 years with the subtitle "An Iris Lover's Catalogue".

The Schreiners make about 8,000 crosses, or pollinations, each year. Of this number about 4,000 are successful. Variable weather conditions influence the percentage of success in setting of seed. Each pod contains many seeds. The little seedling plants are transplanted when they are a few inches tall. When they flower, all poor and ordinary ones are weeded out. Only the best are retained. Later, from these, the final selections are made for introduction to the gardening public. About 25,000-50,000 seedling plants are grown each year; of these only 300 are saved, and of this 300 only 10 to 15 finally are named and introduced.

A truly magnificant flower is the modern garden iris. It is magnificent because of hybridizers like Bob Schreiner.

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2903 Greyling Dr., S.D. 92123

O. C. IT GROW GARDEN CLUB
Second Wednesday, S. Oceanside School Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.
Pres.: Mr. Michael J. Hardick 722-3583
1409 Division, Oceanside 92054

PACIFIC BEACH GARDEN CLUB
Meet second Monday, 7:30 p.m. Community Club House, Gresham and Diamond Sts., Pacific Beach
Pres.: Mrs. Arthur Berthelsen
1434 Grand Ave., San Diego 92109 274-6081

PALOMAR CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY
Third Saturday, 1 p.m., Palomar College Foreign Language Building, Room F22
Pres.: Mrs. Frances Lawson 745-1720
P. O. Box 288, Valley Center 92082

PALOMAR ORCHID SOCIETY
Meets Third Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., Avocado Inn, 114 Hillside Terrace, Vista
Pres.: Paul Lea
1402 Hunsaker St., Oceanside 92054 722-8083

POWAY VALLEY GARDEN CLUB
2nd Wednesday, 9:30 a.m. "Haley's," 13519 Poway Rd.
Pres.: Mrs. Paul L. Bemiller 748-2572
12508 Buchskin Trail, Poway 92064

QUAIL GARDENS FOUNDATION, INC.
230 Quail Garden Drive, Encinitas, Calif. 92024
Mrs. M. J. von Preissig 286-8818
5071 55th St. San Diego, Calif 92115

RANCHO SANTE FE GARDEN CLUB
Second Tuesday—Club House, 2:00 p.m.
Pres.: Hubert Larson
P.O. Box 782 Rancho Santa Fe 92067 756-1926

SAN CARLOS GARDEN CLUB
Fourth Tuesday, San Carlos Club, 6955 Golfcrest Drive
Pres.: Mrs. Douglas Oldfield
6372 Lake Levon, San Diego 92119

SAN DIEGO BROMELIAD SOCIETY
1st Thursday, 8 p.m. Porter Hall Clubhouse (8425 Univ.), La Mesa
Pres.: Wm. E. Knerr, Jr. 279-1134
7178 Hyatt, San Diego 92111

S.D. CHAPTER CALIF. ASS'N NURSERYMEN
Second and Fourth Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
Pres.: Mr. Del Johnson 422-5198
366 Broadway, Chula Vista 92010

SAN DIEGUITO GARDEN CLUB
Third Wednesday, Seacoast Savings Building, Encinitas, 10 a.m.
Pres.: Mrs. Dorothy Reavell
1222 Santa Fe Dr., Encinitas 92024 753-4908

SAN MARCOS GARDEN CLUB
Pres.: Mr. E C. Pferdner
1221 San Julian Dr., San Marcos 92069 744-0226

SAN MIGUEL BRANCH, AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY
Second Wednesday, Porter Hall Clubhouse, La Mesa (8425 University) 8:00 p.m.
Pres.: Mrs. Peter P. Lee 239-3169
1852 31st St., S.D. 92102

SANTA MARIA VALLEY GARDEN CLUB
Second Monday, Ramona Women's Club House, 5th and Main, 9:30 a.m.
Mrs. Troy Reese 789-1334
Rt. No. 1, Box 514-H, Ramona 92065

SANTEE WOMEN'S CLUB Garden Sec.
Pres.: Mrs. Leon Roloff 448-0291
9138 Willow Grove Ave., Santee 92071

VISTA GARDEN CLUB
First Friday, Vista Rec. Center 1:00 p.m.
Pres.: Mrs. Mildred Kessler 724-5594
P. O. Box 44, Vista 92083

VISTA MESA GARDEN CLUB
Second Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. Family Association Center
Pres.: Mrs. Clarence Gominger
7487 Blix St., San Diego 92111 277-1285

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San Diego Floral Association
Floral Building, Balboa Park
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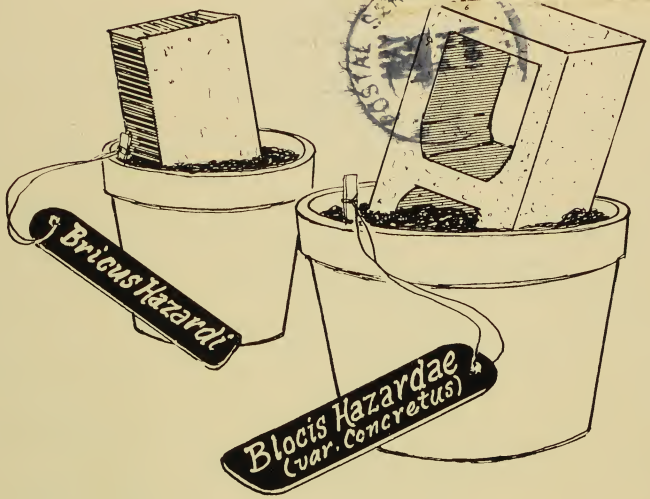

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